

Adult Literacy Contact Centre NEWSLETTER



October 1992

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A project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C.

Public Consultation on the BCTAB

A series of regional workshops will be held in four B.C. locations this month to give community-based educators a chance to respond to the proposed British Columbia Training and Adjustment Board (BCTAB).

In June 1992, the B.C. Cabinet approved plans to establish the BCTAB as a "partnership of business, labour, equity groups, education/training providers, and governments...to deal with provincial labour force development programs and policies" -- the provincial equivalent to the Canadian Labour Force Development Board.

The draft terms of reference for the BCTAB state that "labour force development ...includes all policies, programs, services and initiatives which contribute to the development of a skilled, competitive workforce, particularly through training (including apprenticeship), retraining, upgrading (including adult literacy and basic education, and language training) adjustment, counselling and information."

As a first step in setting up the BCTAB, a Consultation Steering Committee was formed in July 1992 to make recommendations about the Board to the Minister of Advanced Education,

Training and Technology (MAETT).

The committee is comprised of three representatives from business; three from labour; one each from four equity groups (women, Natives, visible minorities, and people with disabilities); one from education/training; and one (ex-officio) from the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission. The Chair is Stuart Clark, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Skills Development Division, MAETT.

The regional workshops have been scheduled by

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**Look for
your
newsletter
renewal
form
inside!**

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the Education Reference Group to the Steering Committee, which represents schools, colleges and institutes, universities, private colleges and community-based educators. The workshops are part of a BCTAB consultation process with B.C.'s non-profit organizations involved in labour force development programs. They are designed to "provide an effective forum for input into the direction of the BCTAB."

One workshop has already taken place in Prince George on October 9, 1992.

The following are also scheduled:

**Dawson Creek - October 14
2 p.m. - 4 p.m.**

Board Room
Regional Administration Building
Northern Lights College
11401 8th Street
Dawson Creek, B.C.
Contact: Paul Dampier
Phone: 784-7518

**Vancouver - October 15
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.**

(Room to be announced)
Simon Fraser University - Harbour
Centre
515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, B.C.
Contact: SFU Continuing Studies
Department
Phone: 291-5070

**Kelowna - October 16
2 p.m. - 4 p.m.**

Room H123, Health Building
Okanagan College

1000 KLO Road
Kelowna, B.C.
Contact: Paula Demers
Phone: 762-5445

Information packages can be picked up from the contacts prior to the workshop.

Additional workshops in other regions may be scheduled. The results and outcomes of all workshops will be presented in a final workshop scheduled for Vancouver on October 23, 1992.

To register for the above workshops contact:

Mark Selman, President
Pacific Association for Continuing
Education (PACE)
c/o Continuing Studies
Simon Fraser University- Harbour
Centre
515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, B.C.
V6B 5K3
Phone: 291-5070
Fax: 291-5098

PACE has also scheduled its own forum on the BCTAB. Information will be provided by educators and others involved in the formation of the Board. The forum is open to all.

**Wednesday, October 21
6 p.m. - 8 p.m.**

Room 1420
Simon Fraser University -
Harbour Centre
515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, B.C.
(Sandwiches will be provided.)

If you plan to attend, please
RSVP to Mark Selman (see
above). ☐

Research Report on Correctional Literacy Needs

A just-released report, commissioned by the John Howard Society of B.C., is "first time research into the literacy experiences of persons incarcerated in British Columbia's correctional centres."

The report -- *Opening Minds Behind Closed Doors: Literacy in B.C. Corrections* -- by Audrey M. Thomas, is a product of the 1991/1992 B.C. literacy cost-shared project, "Literacy research pertaining to adults and youth confined in provincial correctional centres."

Other funding came from the Ministry of the Solicitor-General of Canada and the B.C. Ministry of Attorney-General.

The John Howard Society is an organization which works to rehabilitate offenders on release from prison. The B.C. Society is a federation of eight regional societies,

Society Executive Officer Willie Blonde says the report is the result of a proposal prompted by one of the 1989 Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee (PLAC) recommendations to the MAETT and the B.C. Solicitor-General.

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Recommendation 25 called for [the Ministers] "to cooperatively plan and deliver literacy and upgrading programs within all correctional institutions and halfway houses in the province." In an introduction to the report, Blonde says this recommendation "was based on the reported high rates of illiteracy within inmate populations and the lack of any overall provincial policy for literacy programming within adult correctional facilities and in post-release situations."

To prepare the report, Thomas interviewed inmates and obtained information from questionnaires sent to five selected groups: correctional centre Directors; adult basic education administrators in the corrections field; literacy/ABE instructors in B.C. Corrections; halfway community agencies; and community literacy groups.

Of 78 inmates interviewed in nine facilities across the province, 22 were participants in programs at the time of the interview and 56 were non-participants. The project was carried out between December, 1991 and May, 1992.

Among the findings are:

- ♦ of a suggested list of 10 learning arrangements, 61 per cent of inmate [non-participants] favoured community tutors, and all inmate [participants] thought community tutors would be helpful. Community tutors ranked first for inmate [non-

participants] among all suggested arrangements.

- ♦ ...the lowest educated group in the inmate sample, many of whom were Natives, favoured mandatory assessments upon being incarcerated for the first time and favoured mandatory attendance for those with low education or literacy and numeracy difficulties. ("This could be interpreted as a plea for help," Thomas writes.)

The following are sample recommendations:

- ♦ Correctional and educational staff work closely together in each of the institutions to devise strategies for detecting adults with low literacy skills and for encouraging them to participate in a suitable learning arrangement while incarcerated.
- ♦ Correctional staff work with educational staff to encourage and support the training and use of inmate (peer) and community tutors for prison education programs.
- ♦ B.C. Corrections Branch...work cooperatively with other B.C. Ministries, notably the [MAETT] and the Library Services Branch of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture, with the purpose of enhancing and further developing educational and cultural programs in correctional institutions in the province.

To order copies of the study, contact:

Willie Blonde, Executive Officer
The John Howard Society of B.C.
308 - 560 Johnson Street
Victoria, B.C.
V8V 3C6
Phone: 361-1551
Fax: 361-9382 ☐

The British Columbia Library Association will present an event of interest to public and community college librarians on Friday, October 23, 1992 in Burnaby. The **Computer Assisted Literacy Learning (CALL)** workshop will introduce participants to the learning system, and provide "hands-on" experience. The presenter is Margo Salopek, a consultant with the Open Learning Agency's Workplace Training Systems. The event will take place at the OLA Learning Centre, Suite 248 - 4299 Canada Way, from 1:30 - 4:30 p.m. The registration deadline is October 15, 1992.

For further information, contact:

The B.C. Library Association
110 - 6545 Bonsor Avenue
Burnaby, B.C.
V5H 1H3
Phone: 430-9633

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622 - 510 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1L8
1-800-663-1293 Toll-free in B.C.
684-0624 Lower Mainland
684-8520 Facsimile

The Adult Literacy Contact Centre is a project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C. and is jointly funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology; and the National Literacy Secretariat.

The Centre welcomes receiving your literacy news by phone, fax or mail. We reserve the right to edit written submissions for the newsletter.

The newsletter is published monthly and mailed during the first week of every month. It is available free of charge to any individual or agency upon request.



The Wind Cannot Read Celebrated

A book celebrating the writings of B.C. adult new readers during International Literacy Year (ILY) was launched at the Carnegie Adult Learning Centre in Vancouver on October 6.

The Wind Cannot Read is a collection of stories, poems and personal histories selected from material submitted to the B.C. Book Voyage, part of a 1990 worldwide event celebrating ILY.

The Carnegie event included readings from the book by approximately 15 adult learners, and an address by learner Larry Loyie, who delivered the original B.C. Book to Vancouver after the national Book Voyage launch in Ottawa in January 1990.

The event was sponsored by the Carnegie Learning Centre, the Carnegie Community Centre and the Vancouver Public Library.

The publication of the book was a 1990/1991 cost-shared project between the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the National Literacy Secretariat. The Adult Basic Education Association of B.C., Literacy B.C. and Douglas College were partners in the project.

The collection contains approximately 150 pieces of writing, which represent individual literacy learners (and, in some cases, entire literacy classes) and new English- speakers from throughout B.C. The name of the book comes from the title of a poem by Ellen Szita, the Victoria woman who was featured in a television documentary about literacy (*Ellen's Story*) broadcast nationally last spring:

"...Come child, come ride with me. I will teach you to read and set you free, for I am the wind...."

Over 4,000 copies of the 194-page illustrated paperback have already been distributed to literacy groups and programs in B.C.

Additional copies of the book will be available through the Adult Literacy Contact Centre later this month. □

Literacy Resources for the Disabled

The B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities (BCCPD) has published a special issue of its in-house magazine which features articles on how literacy groups and programs in B.C. serve the disabled community.

The September 1992 edition of *Transition*, published 10 times

yearly by the Transition Publication Society, includes articles on the Adult Learning Disabilities Association (ALDA), the Speech Assisted Reading and Writing (SARAW) program (computer software and hardware designed for the disabled); and the Invergarry Learning Centre (a Surrey School District program which uses SARAW equipment).

Other articles include, "Writing in plain language," "Why should we become literate?" and "Health and literacy."

The BCCPD is a province-wide non-profit organization run by and for people with disabilities. It is an affiliate of the Coalition of Provincial Organizations of the Handicapped and Disabled Peoples' International. The BCCPD mandate is to provide advocacy, lobbying and information-sharing on behalf of individuals and groups with disabilities.

Copies of *Transition* are available from:

Transition Publication Society
B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities
204 - 456 West Broadway
Vancouver, B.C.
V5Y 1R3
Phone: 875-0188 □

Workplace Literacy Advisory Service Available to B.C.

A newly-formed national workplace literacy advisory service plans to canvas the B.C. literacy field on how it can facilitate workplace program delivery in this province.

ABC Canada, a private sector foundation which works to promote literacy, has implemented the service to provide free telephone advice, information and guidance on workplace issues. The service, from ABC Canada's Toronto office, began in June 1992. Sue Waugh, the consultant hired to develop and implement the project, plans to visit B.C. some time in December 1992, sponsored by Literacy B.C.

Waugh has had many years of experience establishing workplace partnerships. This has included the training of workplace deliverers and the development of publications for government, and the design of a promotional strategy around workplace literacy and basic skills for the Canadian Federation of Labour.

Waugh says she "looks forward to working with literacy groups, and employers, unions, and the

deliverers of programs while in B.C." She is particularly interested in "letting B.C. people know that they can forward information to me so I can pass it on or refer people back. I want to be seen as a clearing-house for workplace literacy resources."

Waugh explains there are two components to her advisory service -- telephone and in-person consultations.

"Employers, unions, community literacy groups -- anyone interested in the workplace literacy field -- can call me for information and advice," she says. She says calls so far indicate that "people are interested in how to approach the topic - they want to know what is the best way to do so, because it is a sensitive issue."

Waugh will also offer on-site consultations, "for example, on employer and union awareness," in which the interested organization pays her travel expenses but the consultation is free. She has already conducted two union awareness sessions in Prince Edward Island and plans to deliver a similar session in Calgary before visiting B.C.

Waugh says her mandate will also cover some related projects, which could include:

- ❖ case studies of some successful workplace programs, ("in order for potentially interested companies to sell the idea to management"); and

- ❖ a guide for employers, unions and practitioners on how to conduct needs assessments and program evaluation.

For further information on the service, contact:

Sue Waugh
Workplace Literacy Consultant
ABC Canada
1450 Don Mills Road
Don Mills, Ontario
M3B 2X7
Phone: (416) 442-2292
Fax: (416) 442-2293 □

1992/1993 Learner Events Funding

The 1992/1993 B.C. literacy cost-shared project, "Learners Talking to Learners," has received \$32,000 to fund the fifth annual series of learner events throughout B.C.

Project Coordinator Patty Bossort says, "Learner events are a great learning experience for students because planning an event develops organizational, reading, writing and math skills. Students describe their experiences hosting these events as fun and challenging. Many events have led to the formation of learner support networks."

She adds that "an event can be a seminar, conference, luncheon, meeting, performance....as long as the event is planned by

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learners, the size and form is up to the group."

The guidelines for the project include:

- ❖ at least half of the project's planning committee must be students
- ❖ learner events must take place by May 31, 1993
- ❖ applications must be mailed by December 15, 1992

The Learner Events Provincial Advisory Committee, which makes the funding decisions, consists of six learners and six practitioners. This year's committee chair is Teresa Dresser, a Basic Education student at Malaspina College in Nanaimo.

Applications to participate in the province-wide project were distributed to the literacy field during the first week of October 1992.

To obtain an application package, contact:

Patty Bossort
4280 Windsor Street
Vancouver, B.C.
V5V 4P4

Phone: 876-3780 ☐

Job Openings

The Adult Basic Education Association of B.C. has three new employment opportunities available and invites applications from practitioners throughout the province. First Nations practitioners are especially welcome to apply and in particular for the "ABE Practitioner Speciality Workshops Project," which involves professional development for First Nations people.

Impact of Literacy Education on the lives of Former Literacy Students.

A researcher is required for this year-long position. The researcher will interview a large sample of former students in several locations throughout B.C. to determine if literacy has made their lives fuller and more meaningful. A final project report will document the methods and results of the research. The successful candidate will have extensive experience in the field of literacy or adult basic education and a strong research background. *For further information, contact Larry Bolingbroke (Northwest Community College, Terrace) Phone: 635-6511.*

Regional Professional Development and Needs Assessment Project.

A project coordinator is required to oversee this project. The coordinator will prepare a report outlining the professional needs of adult basic education practitioners in B.C. and will arrange relevant p.d. activities in several regions of the province. The successful candidate will have experience in arranging p.d. activities and conducting needs assessments. A thorough knowledge of the field of ABE and literacy is required. This

position will be for approximately 50 hours per month for a 9-month period. Extensive travel throughout the province will be required. *For further information, contact Jim Bray (University College of the Cariboo, Kamloops) Phone: 828-5284.*

ABE Practitioner Speciality Workshops Project.

The project coordinator will arrange two concurrent one-day workshops to be held in conjunction with the 1993 ABEABC Conference in Fairmont Hot Springs. The workshops will provide a collaborative environment and forum for specific practitioners who do not usually get this kind of planned opportunity. One workshop will focus on First Nations programs; the focus of the second will be on another underrepresented content area, such as the sciences. The coordinator will have a broad knowledge of the ABE field and experience with First Nations programs. This position will be for approximately 125 hours. Preference will be given to candidates from the Kootenays. *For further information, contact Evelyn Battell (Malaspina College, Duncan) Phone: 748-2591.*

All three projects are funded by B.C. literacy cost-shared project funding for 1992/1993.

The closing date for all positions is October 27, 1992.

Send applications to:

ABEABC Personnel Committee
c/o The Adult Literacy Contact
Centre
622 - 510 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, B.C.
V6B 1L8
Fax: 684-8520 ☐